



Centers for Disease Control  
Atlanta, Georgia 30333

Refer: FL-121  
February 1983

**SURGEON GENERAL URGES ADOPTION OF FLUORIDATION**

On February 8, 1983, the Surgeon General issued a statement on fluoridation which points out the oral health and cost benefits of fluoridation, reaffirms the strong endorsement of the U.S. Public Health Service, and urges all health officials and concerned citizens to ensure the benefits for their communities.

The Surgeon General's full statement is enclosed.

**Dental Disease Prevention Activity  
Center for Prevention Services**

Enclosure



## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

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The Surgeon General of the  
Public Health Service  
Washington DC 20201

### WATER FLUORIDATION

One of the avowed aims of medicine throughout history has been to develop curative and preventive measures which will reduce human suffering and improve the quality of life for all people. Over the past several years, remarkable progress has been made in developing preventive capabilities that are now readily available to improve health and reduce the cost of health care for countless millions of people. Fluoridation of community water supplies to reduce dental disease is an excellent example of a highly effective and efficient preventive method which offers a potential benefit to nearly everyone.

Tooth decay is one of this Nation's greatest health problems in terms of the number of people affected and its persistence. Children are most vulnerable. Years of research and community demonstrations have shown that the fluoridation of drinking water supplies is the most effective and least costly public health measure available to prevent tooth decay. Between half and two thirds of the dental decay that children would have if unprotected is prevented if they drink fluoridated water from birth. Many children who drink fluoridated water are decay free. Although this safe and effective preventive measure is easily provided, only about half of the Nation's people drink optimally fluoridated water.

The United States Public Health Service reaffirms its strong endorsement for fluoridating community water supplies to an optimum level wherever the natural level is less than optimum, and stresses that this preventive measure is the single most important commitment that a community can make to the oral health of its children and to future generations. I urge all health officials and concerned citizens to join me in supporting this commitment and in the task of achieving water fluoridation for all community drinking water supplies which lack the fluoride content needed for the prevention of dental caries.

February 8, 1983

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "C. Everett Koop".

C. Everett Koop, M.D.  
Surgeon General